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ABSTRACT

Designed for use in the intermediate grades, this interdisciplinary unit helps students examine traditional and modern roles of women. Fourteen lessons focus on women's activities in colonial America, reasons for women's discontent, the women's rights movement of the 1800's, changes in the roles of women, enfranchisement of women, women's role since 1920, and the goals of women's liberation. Each lesson contains a reading followed by discussion questions and suggested activities. Examples of activities are discussing stereotyping, viewing films, reproducing colonial crafts, creating collages, conducting debates, taking field trips, interviewing women, and creating an 1800's newspaper. A self-evaluation questionnaire is provided for teachers as a means of checking their own awareness of sex stereotyping in the classroom. The document is part of a collection of materials from the Iowa Area Education Agency 7 Teacher Center Project. (LP)

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WOMEN'S RIGHTS UNIT

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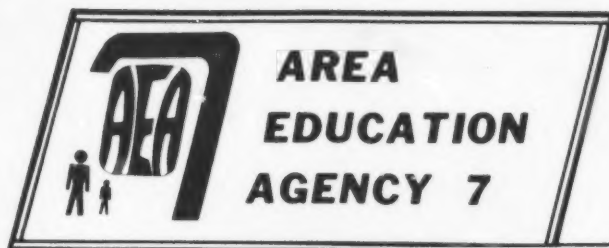
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WOMEN'S RIGHTS UNIT

Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Grades

I. Justification for teaching the unit (why)

General Objective:

ALL MEN AND WOMEN ARE CREATED EQUAL

Specific Objectives:

1. To provide children with information so there won't be limits on their potential roles.
2. To expose children in the middle grades to information about sex roles so they can develop flexible ideas towards the stereotypes drawn by the culture.
3. To show that the freedom to express the best traits of both males and females, as individual situations warrant, can be beneficial.
4. To prepare today's children for tomorrow's society.
5. To imply that traditional sex roles may become blurred and eventually obliterated.
6. To help students develop critical reading and thinking skills so that they can detect and deal with stereotyping on their own.

II. Overview of the plans for teaching the unit (what)

A. Content to be covered

1. The role of Women in the Colonies
2. Why were many women discontented
3. The women's rights movement
4. Changes in the role of women
5. Gaining the right to vote
6. The role of women since 1920
7. The goals of Women's Liberation

B. Suggested materials to be used

1. newspapers
2. encyclopedias
3. pictures
4. people

5. paper (stationery)
6. stamps
7. books
8. music
9. wick for candles
10. parafin for candle making
11. cotton cloth pieces, 12 x 12
12. embroidery yarn and needles
13. embroidery hoops
14. newsprint paper

C. Activities to be scheduled

1. Find pictures and articles of women in the working world
2. look at advertisements
3. list of things a mother or father can do for a child
4. write a letter
5. act as a news reporter and interview
6. class discussion (teacher-pupil learning)
7. talk to Kindergarten or 1st and 4th graders
8. bulletin board displays
9. a speaker
10. a field trip
11. debate
12. play
13. look at textbooks
14. voting on their ideas
15. singing songs

III. Sequential Stages in Development of the Unit

A. Launching the unit

1. This unit is to cover a 2-3 week period, approximately 45 min. daily.
2. The unit can be introduced by discussing the meaning of sex-stereotyping. After the discussion a movie "Anything You Want to Be" could be shown and discussed.
3. A vote could be taken at the beginning and end of the unit to see if the pupils change their minds after studying the unit.
4. At the end of each lesson are suggested activities and topics to be covered.
5. Throughout the unit are activities that can be correlated with Math, English, Spelling, Dramatics, Debates, Geography, Art and Music.

LESSON I

A. Unit Introduction

1. discuss stereotyping
2. show movie (check AEA-7 media center listing for appropriate films available)
3. take notes on feelings toward sex-stereotyping

LESSON II

The American Women's Search for Freedom
What was the role of women in the colonies?

Objectives:

1. to know some of the duties of the women in the colonies.
2. to know how a colonial woman's life differed from the life of a woman who remained in Europe.

Reading:

In 1619 a ship landed at the tiny English Settlement of Jamestown, Virginia. The usual cargo on this ship was 90 women, "young and well recommended," who had been sent to become the wives of colonists there. There were very few white women in Virginia at this time. Life was very hard and some of the men wanted to return to England. The businessmen thought if these men had wives they would stay and help make the colonies a success.

The girls were not required to marry but most of them did. If the girl married the man had to provide 120 pounds of tobacco, Virginia's most valuable crop, to pay her boat fare. This arrangement was so successful that more boats of women came.

In colonial days everyone had to work, so the work was divided between the men and the women. The men's duties were to protect the family, and provide food and shelter. The men cleared the land for farming, built houses and barns. They did most of the field work. They also made tools, furniture and other articles needed by the family. The women managed the household, spun wool and flax into thread, wove cloth and made soap and candles. They also prepared the meals and kept the house clean.

The women's main responsibility was to raise the children. Women usually married young when they were about 14 or 15. Most families had 12 children, so that Dad would have help in the fields.

Most women in the colonies worked hard. They did not have the conveniences we have today. Only the wealthy could afford help.

American women enjoyed more freedom than women in Europe in the 1600's and 1700's. Women were considered to be weaker in body and mind. They arrived at this conclusion because Eve had tempted Adam to sin against God. Therefore, as punishment God had decreed that women were to serve and obey men.

In Europe, the man's word was law. He was the head of the house doing as he pleased in the community. Women were expected to stay at home and do household tasks.

The scarcity of women in the colonies helped them gain more respect. Before a woman would marry a man he had to show he would be a helpful, considerate husband.

American men often took business trips that would keep them away from home for long periods of time, giving the women more responsibility. He had to have someone he could trust to look after his property and manage it.

A woman on the new frontier had to be brave, independent, and self-reliant. A woman had to take her place by the men to protect their homes from the Indians and help harvest crops.

Discussion:

1. Do you agree the colonies could not have been settled without the efforts of women? Why? Why not?
2. Who do you think had to work the hardest in colonial days, the men or the women? Explain your answer.
3. If you were an Englishwoman in the 1700's, would you want to move to America? Why? Why not?

Suggested Activities:

1. Find pictures in magazines showing the modern conveniences of present days for both men and women. Use encyclopedias and other materials to serve as models to make sketches and drawings of how the same task would be accomplished in colonial days.
2. Make candles by dipping the wicks into hot parafin.
3. Construct a replica of a colonial settlement.
4. Make a sampler of cross-stitch.
5. Make a large map or small, showing where the colonies were located. Record the average winter and summer temperature where the colonies were located.

LESSON III

Follow up from suggested activity.

LESSON IV

Why were many women discontented with their role in life?

Objectives:

1. to realize the rights of women were limited in many ways.
2. women began to protest their unequal treatment.

Read:

Even though American Women had greater freedom, they still lacked most of the rights and privileges enjoyed by men. Women's rights were limited into the 19th century both by law and custom.

Laws in the colonies were modeled after those in England. A woman had no right to any property of her own and all property she possessed at the time of her marriage became her husbands. If she worked away from home, her wages were her husbands. He could even sell her clothes to pay his debts, although this didn't happen often. She could not testify as a witness in court, even if she herself was on trial, even for a crime as serious as murder. In order for her will to be valid, her husband had to sign it. She had no legal rights to her children. If her husband was cruel to them or took them away she had little power to stop him.

In the early 19th century women were not to interfere in business or government. New Jersey was the only state that allowed women to vote for government officials, and even there the right to vote was taken away from women in 1807. The idea that women might be doctors, lawyers, or ministers seemed almost unthinkable.

Women were not even allowed a good education. They thought if she got too much education she would get "grand ideas" and this would spoil her as a homemaker. Some girls went with the boys to grammar school but very few went on to high school and there were no colleges open to women. The rich girls received more education because they could afford private teachers.

Many women in the United States were beginning to feel they weren't being treated fairly. By the early 19th century many new inventions and ideas were rapidly changing people's way of living. The American Revolution helped spread the idea that all human beings are entitled to freedom and equal treatment under the law.

The Society of Friends, more commonly known as the Quakers were some of those who protested most strongly against the treatment of women. They had long believed that men and women were equal in the sight of God. At Quaker meetings anyone could speak freely, therefore women were used to having a voice in community affairs. Some of them were beginning to use their freedom to demand equal rights for women everywhere.

Discussion:

1. What do you think were the most harmful kinds of discrimination practiced against women in the early 19th century? Explain the reasons for your choices.
2. When Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal", do you think he was referring to women as well as men? Explain your answer.

Suggested Activities:

1. Use encyclopedias and other material to discover the names of persons whose voices were raised in protest against the treatment of women. How did they protest to help their cause?
2. Research the beliefs of the Quaker religion. Find out how the Quakers helped the protest movement. Who were the people involved?
3. Select a random sample of books from the library--taking every 10th or 20th book. Tally the number of books that have males as main characters versus females as main characters. Make a graph to show the findings. Next, separate the books published before 1970. Is there a change toward representation of the sexes? Make a graph to show the findings. Make up math questions over the graphs concerning percentages. Write a newspaper article on the findings.
4. Make a collage of advertisements showing those directed at women as a housewife, mother, a sex object, an object of beauty, a professional, etc.
5. Make a collage of advertisements directed at the man as a sports enthusiast, financial wizard, a professional, a family breadwinner, a father, etc.
6. Discuss activities 4 and 5 as to what ways the advertising appeals to either men or women.

LESSON V

Activities from previous lesson.

LESSON VI

How did the movement for Women's Rights get under way?

Objectives:

1. to know how the women's rights movement began to gain favor with the public.
2. to become familiar with some of the leaders of the women's rights movements and what they accomplished.

Read:

How did the Women's rights movement get underway?

In 1840 women became involved in the movement to bring slavery to an end. They found that while attending a convention in London, England that they were also victims of discrimination. An example of this was: While the men made speeches and passed resolutions, they were forced to sit in the gallery hidden behind a screen. They were angry and embarrassed. It seemed to them that they weren't any better off than the slaves, therefore the fight for women's rights were just as important as the struggle against slavery.

Two women, Lucretia Mott, a Quaker from Philadelphia, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a housewife from New York attended the meeting in London. Realizing something had to be done, they organized a women's rights convention in a small manufacturing town of Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. The women and the men at this convention passed several resolutions supporting equal rights for women. An example was, they declared women should be treated the same as men under the law and they should have the right to vote.

Many people known as "feminists" joined the movement to secure equal rights for women after the Seneca Falls convention.

Susan B. Anthony, a young teacher was one of the new recruits to the feminist movement. She was a hard worker becoming a very effective leader.

Anthony and a close friend Stanton spread the movement from city to city. They held meetings, published books and newspapers to support their movement.

In 1837 to 1901 the world had entered into the Victorian Age. The period was named after a Queen in England. The belief was that women's skirts were to reach the ground, it also was improper for women to act like men. Because of these beliefs the feminists had to face bitter attacks from some men and women. The feminists were called "freaks" who were trying to destroy family life. Their meetings were often broken up by mobs that threw eggs at the speakers and ridiculed them.

Discussion:

1. Why do you suppose so many men and women opposed equal rights for men and women?

Activity:

Finish any activities from previous lessons.

LESSON VII

Film "Women's Rights Leaders" and discussion.

LESSON VIII

What changes took place in the role of women?

Objectives:

1. to know what opportunities began to be available to women in the 1800's.
2. to know how new inventions and education influenced the women's status in life.
3. will understand the purpose of women in factories.
4. will investigate the role of an educated woman in society.

Read:

In colonial America women always worked in the home. Unmarried or widowed women would work in the homes of relatives. Some women did weaving at home for merchants to earn extra money.

The Industrial Revolution got women out of the homes and into the factories because they would accept lower wages than the men. This gave the women the freedom and the independence they were looking for.

You remember that women didn't go to school but as time passed this changed. Mary Lyon founded Mount Holyoke in Massachusetts, a college for women. This was the first college for women in the United States.

In 1835, Oberlin College in Ohio became the first college to admit both women and men.

The idea that every child should receive a free education was spreading through the country. Many new elementary schools and high schools were begun. The girls and boys were admitted equally and girls soon showed that they were at least equal to boys in school work.

Many new inventions were creating jobs for women. Typewriters created a demand for typists, telephones were invented so operators were needed. During the same period some women became sales clerks and teachers.

Women also were entering professions that had been open only to men. Examples are: Elizabeth Blackwell became the first lady to graduate from an American medical school in 1849. Antoinette Brown Blackwell was the first woman ordained as a Protestant minister. Arabella Mansfield was the first woman lawyer licensed by the State of Iowa.

Discussion:

1. Do you think the women were better off working at home or in the factories? Explain.
2. Do you think that letting women get more education has any effect on our society today? Explain.
3. Why do you think Americans became more willing to accept the idea of women entering professions such as law and medicine?

Suggested Activities:

1. Use research materials to discover what educational courses were offered to women.
2. Invite a panel of volunteer Senior Citizens to bring in pictures and discuss the opportunities available to them as far as education in their youth. Ask them to describe their school days, recreational activities, etc.
3. Find articles or pictures in newspapers of women in the working world.
4. Analyze the sport section. How much is devoted to girls' sports versus boys' sports?
5. Working with partners, list all the things you can think of that only a mother can do for a child. That only a father can do.
6. Field trip to Grout Museum. May take Senior Citizens along to explain displays.

LESSON IX

Activity from previous lesson.

LESSON X

How did women gain the right to vote?

Objectives:

1. to know when women's suffrage began.
2. to know how women gained the right to vote.
3. to understand how World War I helped the women with the equal rights movement.
4. to know what the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution includes.
5. to find out how men and women feel about women in politics today.

Suggested words for spelling and dictionary use:

suffrage	newspaper
suffragettes	women
amendments	President
politics	sex-stereotype

Read:

In 1869 Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton founded the National Women Suffrage Association to work for the right to vote. Women believed that if they earned the right to vote, they could help elect lawmakers who would be willing to grant them all the same rights as men.

The territory of Wyoming gave the women suffrage movement its first important victory in 1869 when it passed a law giving women the right to vote and to hold public office. When Wyoming joined the Union in 1890, it was the first state to allow woman suffrage. Colorado, Utah, and Idaho also granted women the right to vote during the next few years.

In the beginning of the 20th century, Carrie Chapman Catt and Alice Paul wanted an amendment to the United States Constitution that would guarantee all American women the right to vote.

To achieve this goal the "suffragettes" held mammoth parades and demonstrations in New York, Washington and other cities. They also picketed the White House and other public buildings.

World War I helped boost the woman suffrage. Many men were called into war which left the many jobs on the farms and in the factories to the women. It seemed to many Americans that if women could give such valuable assistance to their country, they should have a voice in the government.

In 1919 the United States Congress finally passed a constitutional amendment that granted voting rights to women. This amendment had to be approved by 36 of 48 states. A year later 35 states had ratified.

Then in August 1920 Tennessee voted on it and it passed by two votes. The women had won their long hard struggle and the Nineteenth Amendment became part of the United States Constitution.

Questions:

1. Do you think the women were wise to use picketing and demonstrations? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think the right was given women to vote?
3. Discuss class feelings towards women's rights in the home, community and in politics

Suggested Activities:

1. An English project. Write a letter to Matrix, Women in Communications Inc., 8305-A Shoal Creek Blvd., Austin, Texas 78758. Ask for reprints on how many women are elected officials in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, State Legislature bodies and Governorships.
2. Students act as news reporters. Discuss proper ways of interviewing and questions to ask. Write up a report.
Interview topic - Interview one man and one woman and ask how they feel about women in politics, especially a woman as President of the United States.
3. Look in newspapers and find something about men or women in politics. Bring articles to class, discuss and put on a bulletin board.

LESSON XI

Activity from previous lesson.

LESSON XII

What was the role of women since 1920?

Objectives:

1. to understand the role of women.
2. to know how the role of women has changed since 1920.
3. to see how women's dress has changed.
4. to understand women's role during the war.

Read:

The Nineteenth Amendment gave millions of women the right to vote. Today there are more women voters than men voters. In 1947 there were 16 women in the United States House of Representatives. Women are also serving as state lawmakers, city mayors, judges and directors of federal government agencies.

In the 1920's the biggest majority of the American women were homemakers who had no other occupation. About two fifths of our country's total labor force is made up of women.

During the period of World War II between 1941 and 1945 many women entered the work force. Many were doing the difficult jobs of making steel and welding parts for tanks and airplanes.

The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 forbids employers to discriminate against women in hiring or promoting employees.

The American way of life has changed due to women working. Husbands have begun helping with household chores. Nursery schools and day care centers have popped up all over the United States.

Women have gained the right to live and dress with more freedom than they previously had. Their hair went from long hair to short and they began wearing comfortable clothing. They began taking part in vigorous sports.

Another change in the last fifty years for women is the fact that divorces are easier for her to get. Many people feel that women's freedom has had a harmful effect on family life.

Discussion:

Reading materials

Students talk about their ambitions. Are they sex-stereotyped?

Suggested Activities:

1. Survey the career plans of girls and boys in lower grades (K or 1st) and those in 4th grade. Is there a difference? Are choices stereotyped?
2. Make a bulletin board display of men and women engaged in non-stereotyped activities or of "breakthroughs" for either sex.
3. Find pictures and compare women's dress in the past and present.
4. Have a speaker - one that is in charge of hiring in a factory, store or a school administrator.

LESSON XIII

Activity - Speaker followed by a question and answer period.

LESSON XIV

What are the goals of women's liberation?

Objectives:

1. to see if our books are sex-stereotyped.
2. to look at the treatment of women in "men's fields" such as science, engineering, etc.
3. to recognize Gloria Steinem views for Women's Liberation.
4. to know the purpose of the Women's Liberation Movement.

Read:

Women feel that even though they have equal voting rights they still are not being treated equal. They feel employers are not letting women earn the same wages as men or have the same opportunities. Also that counselors are discouraging the

girls from science, engineering and other "mens fields" in schools.

Just like the suffragettes in earlier times, supporters of Women's Liberation are using various methods to promote their cause. They have organized a group "National Organization for Women" (NOW) to work for equality between the sexes. They have been making speeches, holding demonstrations and publishing newspapers and magazines. The women libbers are also campaigning for the election of law-maker: who will agree with their view.

One of the main goals of the women is to have Congress pass a constitutional amendment giving women the right to be treated in the same way as men. Many people are against this because they feel that women shouldn't be drafted and sent into combat.

Some people feel that because of physical differences they could never be treated equally or the same in every way. Others feel that if they were treated equally in every way then there would be more freedom and happiness for everyone.

Suggested Activity:

Discuss songs that are sex-stereotyped.

Culminating Activities - Conclusion

1. Create a newspaper written during the 1800's. If it was written in 1869, include letters to the editor on the pros and cons of the National Women's Suffrage Association. (These letters may be contributed by students who wish to take a position on the issue.) Cartoons, sketches for advertisements, a society column, a want ad and for sale page should be included. The class must be organized into the personnel necessary to publish the paper, which may be distributed to all students and parents.
2. Have a style show for another class or group in their class presenting costumes from the past and present. A good source for costumes is the Goodwill Auxiliary.
3. A debate on the pros and cons of women in the home, in politics and if a woman should have a career outside the home.
4. Vote to see if ideas at beginning of the unit have changed.
5. Write a play and present it to the class, parents, or the volunteer Senior Citizens.

Checking on learnings:

Observe attitudes

1. Mental ability-Ask students to write an essay on a topic of their interest.
Give an objective test.
2. Participation-Observe how they work with others (ideas).
3. Stimulation-Are they interested in finding out more?
4. Art - Do the students show creative, self-expression through cartoons?
5. Critical thinking-Is their ability to collect and interpret data improving?
6. Observe the student's ability to use maps, charts, graphs, dictionaries, and encyclopedias.

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Inquiring About Freedom - Civil Rights and Individual Responsibility
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SEXIST EDUCATION

This questionnaire is provided for a "self-check" of your awareness level by Dr. Joseph Lamberti, Director of the U.N.I. Curriculum.

Do you unconsciously practice sex-stereotyping in your classroom?

5. Yes, generally 4. Frequently 3. Sometimes 2. Infrequently 1. Never

- ___ 1. Do the boys generally do the more physical type jobs?
- ___ 2. Do the boys generally perform executive duties in the classroom?
- ___ 3. Do the girls generally do the light work, cleaning and secretarial chores?
- ___ 4. Do you make more comments to girls than to boys about their appearance?
- ___ 5. Do you make more comments to boys than girls about their athletic ability?
- ___ 6. Do you ever say, "Boys shouldn't hit girls"?
- ___ 7. Do you ever say, "Ladies don't talk that way"?
- ___ 8. Do you ever say, "Ladies before gentlemen"?
- ___ 9. Do you expect girls to be more verbal and artistic than boys?
- ___ 10. Do you expect boys to be more mathematical and scientific than girls?
- ___ 11. Do you tend to discipline girls verbally and leniently?
- ___ 12. Do you tend to discipline boys strictly and physically?
- ___ 13. Do you expect girls to be more interested in reading?
- ___ 14. Do you place "boys vs. girls" in competitive situations?
- ___ 15. Do you have separate lines for girls and boys?
- ___ 16. Do you refuse to challenge other staff members when you hear sexist statements?
- ___ 17. Do you ever use the terms scatterbrained, nosey, schemer, emotional and intuitive when referring to girls?
- ___ 18. Do you ever use the terms absent minded, intellectually curious, planners, sensitive or logical when referring to boys?
- ___ 19. Do you react negatively to boys who have long hair or wear earrings? or to girls with short hair or wear slacks?
- ___ 20. Do the lessons you use include more exciting role models for boys than for girls?

Grading Scale: Add all responses and divide by 20.

Between 1 - 2.5 Right on!

Between 2.6-3.5 There's still hope!

Between 3.6-5.0 Consciousness Raising Therapy Needed!